

Dear Chairs Maroney and D'Agostino, Vice Chairs Fonfara and Gibson, and Ranking Members Witkos and Rutiliano, and members of the General Law Committee,

My name is Timothy Gabriele. I am a resident of North Haven, CT and I am writing in support of HB-5146 An Act Establishing a Supermarket Food Donation Program.

Feeding America estimates that nearly half a million Connecticut residents struggle with hunger and over 130,000 children in the state are food insecure at any given moment. Food access is also a huge issue in our state, with many areas in the state being designated "food deserts" because of a lack of access to healthy, affordable food. We are also in the midst of a massive period of inflation driving up the costs of food in a state with an already hyper-inflated cost-of-living for all but the most well-off. Despite all this, ReFed estimates that roughly 30% of all food in Supermarkets is thrown away when many of it remains comestible, often for merely cosmetic or marketing purposes. Understaffed, low-budget food banks, pantries, and other volunteer organizations are doing their best to remedy this systemic crisis, but they lack the resources of one of the wealthiest states in the union.

Every effort should be made to ensure that the existing food being wasted within the retail space be repurposed to feed the food insecure in Connecticut and ensure that no one within our borders goes hungry.

I hope the committee and Connecticut lawmakers agree that HB-5146 deserves your support. I thank the committee for their time.

Sincerely,
Timothy Gabriele
North Haven, CT